Policies, Programs and Implementation Standing Committee Meeting
1/25/2000

Participants: Peter Abeyta (New Mexico), Ghedam Bairu (NCES), Ron Danforth (New York), Jim Haessly (Wisconsin), Lee Hoffman (NCES), Carol Hokenson (Minnesota), Roger Hummel (Pennsylvania), Dennis Powell (Illinois), Leland Tack (Iowa), Bill Smith (South Dakota), Judith Fillion (New Hampshire), and Molly Soule (ESSI)

I. FERPA- LeRoy Rooker

A. Three main FERPA issues in relation to PPI

- *Destroying records-* FERPA permits transfer of records and requires access to parents but does not have any statements about destruction of records, this is the decision of the schools.

- *Students on free/reduced price lunch-* is this an education data element (assessment data, for example)?

- *Data sharing* (criteria for sharing data, confidentiality issues)

B. Discussion of Free and Reduced Price Lunch Students

- Dennis Powell explained that statewide assessments often ask students to identify whether they are on the free and reduced price lunch plan. The committee asked whether this is an education data element. In addition, it is now linked to adequacy (now we know where students live).

- LeRoy Rooker explained that the USDA would say that is not an education record data element; however, if it is directly related to students and it is not defined by FERPA, then it can be used as an education data. He also noted that USDA could create tighter control of information under their statute.

- Rooker also stated that in terms of social security numbers, there is no exception in FERPA that allows the sending off of social security numbers to an agency to tell of a student's eligibility without parental consent. This is also true for direct certification— parents sign off and then districts notify parents that the information will be disclosed.

C. Data sharing

- Lee Tack noted that for pre-kindergarten, vocational education, etc, one big data set is needed.

- It was noted that building massive databanks leads to problems with confidentiality and privacy protection.

- Ronald Danforth expressed that there needs to be a basis for releasing the information to the school. There are provisions in state laws that link specific students when there is a direct concern such as juvenile justice (anyone who receives disclosed information can not re-disclose information).

D. Future of FERPA

- Rooker indicated that they are trying to map out a document (about 25 pages or so) that will lay out parameters.

- Rooker stressed that it is important to remember that you need a basis in FERPA for releasing information (if there is not a basis, then it is not a policy issue, it's a legal issue).

- It is hoped that there will be more data sharing in and among agencies

- In regards to the free and reduced price lunch, there is a disagreement between the food and nutrition agency and the data agencies (the USDA wants to control what is done with the information).

- There also needs to be further clarification about the terms "serve the student" and "prior to adjudication"

II. Special task awards -Mary McCrory and Ghedam Bairu

- This year there were 17 applications and the reviewers accepted 12 (California, Connecticut, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Mississippi, Nevada, New Hampshire, North Dakota, Northern Marianas, Oklahoma and Oregon).

- The projects that were not funded were either late or out of scope. There were budget reductions this year, but they were able to award more than originally thought. For states requesting higher levels of money (around $80,000), they asked for the state to pick up certain items that did not appear "essential".

- To expedite the process, there will be electronic applications next year. The funding for next year is not yet certain.

III. Schedule for work and vouchering and tracking- Mary McCrory and Lee Hoffman

- Vouchers are moving along on schedule.

- States have encountered problems keeping records of tax orders. To better identify who the money belongs to, they need a better tracking system (one that uses identifiers).

- Carol Hokenson added that the treasurer's office needs header and vendor information numbers to link money with proper people. The vendor information numbers also need to make sense so the treasurer will be able to interpret them (there should be a 22 digit field with the agency name and the vendor number).

IV. Fellows program- Mary McCrory and Lee Hoffman

- The November fellows were very energetic. NAEP would like 10 fellows (in addition to the two dozen fellows) to work on NAEP issues. These fellows would most likely be NAEP coordinators; they would receive more in-depth training on large-scale assessments.

- The deadline for Fellows Program is March 15, 2000 (the application is electronic).

V. New task force on crime, violence and discipline -Bill Smith

- *Recommendation of the Crime, Violence and Discipline Reporting Task Force* report needs to be updated due to the trends in school violence in the last 4-5 years. If the proper strategies are employed, data can improve school safety.

- The proposed members are Annette Barwick (Florida), Bunny Mack (South Carolina), Robert Rachor (Ohio), Linda Rocks (Louisiana), Helene Bettencourt (Massachussetts), Bill Smith (South Dakota), Susan Meston (Michigan), Judith Thompson (Connecticut), and Brad James (Vermont).

- The goals of the task force are:

  ➢ Devise strategies for data collection- these include a process explaining how to use data to make a difference like, defining data elements and developing definitions common among OCR, SDFS, Special Education, alternative disciplinary actions, definitions of school level incidents that are not crimes like behavior issues, strategies to increase reliability and validity of district data and web-based procedures and strategies to address dissemination of the report.

  ➢ Modify, revise and expand existing report-change emphasis from state to district level

- Amanda Miller and Katherine Chandler of the Education Statistics Services Institute will be providing contract support for this task.

- A working group will devise dissemination strategies.

- The task force was approved.

VI. Race and ethnicity tabulations

- OCR and CCR- PPI wants guidelines to make a deadline to help this move ahead. The EIAC guidelines provide a solid foundation, but there are some areas of disagreement.

- There was a discussion of the two questions versus one (regarding Hispanic/ethnicity issues), a matrix and the combination categories.

- There are three options: 1) wait 2)state our position as a group (this is how it should be done) 3) reinforce policies of the government

- Because states need adequate time to report information, Robert Hummel suggested that we take a position to not do anything until after a decision is made and then encourage it to move forward.

- PPI suggested a two year lead time for states and districts to make changes, this would allow time for system changes and will increase the likelihood of comparable data. Carol will bring this information to the steering committee.

Policies, Programs and Implementation Standing Committee Meeting
1/26/2000

I. Next Steps

A. Staffing

- Two members of PPI are needed to review a document of student record keeping systems

- Two members are needed to work on a staff data handbook (two days in March)- Judith Fillion (New Hampshire) and Peter Abeyta (New Mexico) volunteered

- Lee Tack (Iowa), and Carol Hokenson (Minnesota) will be reviewers for the Student Record System

B. Other issues

- Dennis Powell suggested human subjects as an issue for the future. PPI will invite Helene Derramond in July to discuss this issue at the summer conference.

- Judith discussed state-wide profiles from CCSSO and issues of consistency and data comparability at state level. The data needs to be meaningful. States may want to look at other states' web sites to gain awareness and discover their reporting methods.

- It was again emphasized that we will wait until the 25-page FERPA guidelines document is released before taking action on data sharing issues.

- There was also a concern for the delay in the publication of the facilities handbook- PPI would like to know when this will be ready (even in draft version).